

Privacy Notice for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support, including Discretionary Housing Payments (HB) and Exceptional Hardship Fund Payments (CTS) (a joint service with Sevenoaks District Council)

[Housing Benefit](#) is a national benefit to help you pay your rent if you are on a low income. It is funded by Central Government but administered locally by us. [Council Tax Support](#) is a local scheme, based on similar criteria to Housing Benefit, to help people on a low income, in or out of work, or in receipt of state benefits. [Discretionary Housing Payments](#) and [Exceptional Hardship Fund Payments](#) are extra payments made at our discretion to help people in receipt of Housing Benefit, Universal Credit or Council Tax Support who are in serious financial difficulty.

Processing activity - in order to provide the service, it is necessary for us to collect and hold personal information about you. The information collected and held will vary and depend on the nature of the service. In general terms, we process personal information relating to:

- administration
- award of benefit/support
- recovery of overpayments
- calculation of entitlement(s)
- discretionary payment(s)
- notification(s)
- appeals
- investigating and if applicable, prosecuting for fraudulent activity

Information requirements – our processing activities may include:

- full name
- address including postcode
- date of birth
- telephone number
- email address
- National Insurance Number
- employer details
- income details
- financial details
- health information
- expenditure details
- Power of Attorney details
- information relating to other persons in your household

Lawful bases - our lawful bases for processing your personal information are:

- our legal obligation(s) under the Local Government Finance Act 1992
- our legal obligation(s) under the Social Security Administration Act 1992
- our legal obligation(s) under the Discretionary Financial Assistance Regulations 2001
- our legal obligation(s) under the Housing Benefit Regulations 2006
- our legal obligation(s) under the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (Default Scheme) Regulations 2012
- where needed for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest (under the above legislation)
- the exercise of official authority vested in us under the Serious Crime Act 2007 (where needed to disclose information to prevent fraud)

Reasons for processing - some of the information that is collected and shared is classified as

- special category personal data;
- criminal convictions and offences (including alleged offences).

This is processed for reasons of substantial public interest under the laws that apply to us (see above) where this helps to meet our broader social obligations such as where it is necessary for us to fulfil our legal obligations and regulatory requirements. We have a Data Protection Policy that sets out how this information will be handled.

Joint Data Controller-the administration of housing benefit and council tax support, including discretionary housing payments and exceptional hardship fund payments is undertaken by us jointly with Sevenoaks District Council under a collaborative partnership arrangement. We decide together all the purposes for using the personal information that we share and we decide together the broad ways in which that personal information will be used.

Data sharing - some of the information we hold about you may come from third party sources such as the Department of Work and Pensions and the Electoral Registration Officer. We may share your information with partner organisations that inspect or handle public funds, to prevent and detect fraud and error including:

- council department(s)
- other local authorities
- HM Revenue and Customs
- Cabinet Office (as part of the [National Fraud Initiative](#))
- National Audit Office
- Police
- credit reference agencies
- health and social care organisations
- social housing providers
- Callcredit Ltd, who risk assess claims on our behalf

We share with and use enforcement agents during the course of enforcing overpayments of housing benefit

If you have given us your permission in writing, some of your information may be shared with:

- a named friend or family member
- your landlord
- support worker or other individual authorised by you to act on your behalf

We subscribe to a tracing system called [LoCTA](#) which allows us to search a subset of all subscribing local authorities' revenues systems to trace and provide up to date information on individuals. Your information is inputted into LoCTA and shared with other local authorities. We also subscribe to a search and trace system provided by [Callcredit Ltd](#) that provides up to date information on individuals as well.

We may also rely on a number of **exemptions**, which allow us to share information without needing to identify a lawful basis for the sharing and without needing to provide you with information about the sharing. Please refer to the Kent & Medway Information Agreement for further details on our sharing arrangements.

Retention period - we keep your personal information for the minimum period necessary. The information outlined in this Privacy Notice will be kept after all action on your claim has finished and the period required by us for legal and audit purposes has expired, unless exceptional circumstances require longer retention e.g. a pending court case. All information will be held securely and disposed of confidentially.

Automated decision making – we may make automated decisions concerning your entitlement. The automated decisions are time-related changes to your entitlement (e.g. a change to your local housing allowance rate due to a child reaching a certain age) or income-related information received directly from certain partner organisations (e.g. HM Revenue and Customs). You have a right of appeal against our automated decision-making.

Anonymisation- your personal information may be converted ('anonymised') into statistical or aggregated data in such a way that ensures that you cannot be identified from it. Aggregated data cannot, by definition, be linked back to you as an individual and may be used to conduct research and analysis, including the preparation of statistics for use in our reports.

Right to object – where processing your personal information is required for the performance of a public GDPR Housing Benefit & Council Tax Support including Discretionary Housing Payments (HB) and Exceptional Hardship Fund Payments (CTS) Privacy Notice

interest task (see our lawful bases above), you have the right to object on 'grounds relating to your particular situation'. We will have to demonstrate why it is appropriate for us to continue to use your personal data.

Please refer to our Corporate Privacy Notice at www.dartford.gov.uk for further details of how we process your personal information and for details on your additional rights.